

Neighborhood News

Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department

July 2002

Build or improve with the Home Improvement Loan Program

Had enough of that harvest gold carpeting? Having dreams about a new kitchen? The city's Home Improvement Loan Program can turn dreams into reality. Since its inception in 1988, more than 1,500 people have borrowed more than \$14 million to fix-up and add-on.



The city's Home Improvement Loan Program can be used for small or big improvements, such as this family room addition.

The program is administered by the Neighborhood Services Department in partnership with Wells Fargo Bank and Neighborhood Housing Services of Phoenix Inc. Home owners with incomes in the low-to-moderate range can borrow up to \$25,000 to pay for home improvements such as installing a new roof, fence or evaporative cooler, updating electrical or plumbing systems, remodeling a kitchen or bath or building a room addition. It's a low-interest loan: the city contributes a grant or subsidy that reduces the interest rate by 3.25-percent and the lender reduces the rate an additional 1-percent and waives some fees.

To qualify for the loan, you must live within city boundaries and meet income criteria. Even home owners who are not eligible for a city subsidy can still get an interest rate reduction from Wells Fargo.

To get more information on the Home Improvement Loan Program call the Neighborhood Services Department at (602) 495-0700.

Justice Department approves Phoenix's redistricting maps

The U.S. Department of Justice has approved the new City Council maps submitted by the city in January. That means the redrawn district boundaries comply with federal requirements to protect voting rights. The new boundaries under the revised maps will be used for the 2003 council elections.

The city is required by charter to redraw the district lines every 10 years following the decennial census.

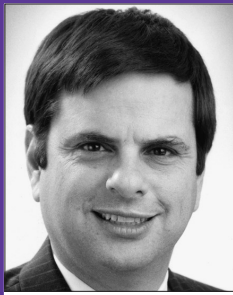
The city has eight council districts. From September to December of last year, the city conducted more than 25 open houses to receive comments and suggestions from residents regarding the redistricting process and to help redraw the maps. For more information on the redistricting process, visit phoenix.gov/redistricting.html on the Internet or call the City Manager's Office at (602) 262-6941.

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COUNCIL

CORNER



*Phil Gordon,
Council Member
District 4*

One of my first priorities when I was appointed chair of the Council's Neighborhood Revitalization, Housing and Historic Preservation Subcommittee in January was to help the Neighborhood Services Department develop a system to target long-standing blighted properties.

This month, those efforts come to fruition as the department begins to implement a number of new policies and procedures designed to keep our neighborhoods clean. Already, the department is using its new computer system to automatically generate information on the most egregious cases of chronic violators, and has established a staff team to focus on resolving those cases.

The department has also created the definition of a "chronic recidivist property," which allows the case to

proceed through a legal fast track. Any property that within the past two years has been in continuous violation of city codes for six or more months will be considered a chronic recidivist and will be subject to the immediate issuance of a civil citation, a formal notice of violation and/or a criminal summons.

Finally, the Neighborhood Services Department will be embarking on a major public education and outreach effort on key blight and code enforcement issues to improve community awareness, increase understanding about code requirements, and improve coordination among city departments for better code enforcement.

Maintaining the integrity and vitality of our neighborhoods is a constant challenge. These changes will make that challenge a little easier to meet. If you have thoughts about other ways we can make our neighborhoods better, feel free to contact me at phil.gordon@phoenix.gov.

NSD recognized by school district

The Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department was among a group of organizations honored at a spring reception hosted by the Washington Elementary School District. Each year the district recognizes partners who advance the common goals of schools and businesses, and enhance community quality of life. The Phoenix Fire Department was also recognized.

The award citation for NSD says "For 10 years, the city of Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department has funded school programs and playground equipment improvements, most recently at Desert View [Elementary School]. It's a partnership that benefits the entire community."

The playground at Desert View was funded through the Community Development Block Grant and Fight Back programs and was the result of a partnership between the district, Desert View Fight Back neighborhood association and NSD.



Playground improvements at Desert View Elementary School, 8621 N. Third St., included new play equipment, resilient surfacing and shade structures.

Who's driving your car?

Auto theft continues to be a problem in Phoenix. Do your part to reduce the risk by taking a few simple steps.

- Lock your car.
- Take your keys when you are not in your vehicle.
- Park in well-lighted areas, in attended lots if possible. If you have a garage at home, use it.
- Don't leave your car running while you run into the store or to the ATM.
- Do not leave valuables in sight.
- Use car alarms, steering wheel locks or steering column locks.
- Sign up for the Watch Your Car program.



*Watch Your Car
windshield decal.*

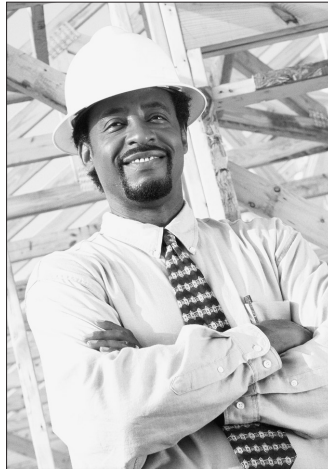
The Watch Your Car program is administered by the Arizona Automobile Theft Authority. Here's how it works: when you register for the program and put a decal on your windshield, you are, in effect, asking police officers to stop the vehicle to verify ownership. Police officers will only stop the vehicle if they see it driven between 1 and 5 a.m.; the only exception is that an officer could stop the vehicle at any time if it is seen within one mile of the border with Mexico. To sign up for the program or get more information call (602) 604-9034 or sign up online by visiting azwatchyourcar.com on the Internet.



Business opportunities for small-business subcontractors

The city has launched a Small Business Enterprise pilot program to complement its existing minority and woman-owned business enterprise subcontracting goals program. The pilot program extends opportunities to small construction subcontractors, both non-minority and minority, to participate in city projects.

Some of the trade areas where there are opportunities include landscaping, manhole installation, concrete, asphalt, painting, electrical, carpentry, plumbing and traffic control devices. To be certified as a Small Business Enterprise, the firm needs to have been in business at least two years and all owners must have a personal net worth under \$250,000 (excluding home and interest in the business).



Small construction subcontractors who want to participate in city projects should call (602) 534-2917.

Licensed subcontractors interested in getting certified and participating in city construction projects should call Mark Escobedo of the Engineering and Architectural Services Department at (602) 534-2917.

JULY CALENDAR

16 City minority/women/small business certification workshop.

Call (602) 262-6790.

17 Phoenix Commission on Housing and Neighborhoods

4:30 p.m., Phoenix City Hall.
Call (602) 534-3132.

18 Landlord and renter education, 6-9 p.m.

at Phoenix City Hall. Free, registration required.
Call (602) 256-3517.

There are no BOPA (batteries, oil, paint, anti-freeze) collections in July or August.

Commission on Housing and Neighborhoods

Did you know that the city has an advisory committee on housing and neighborhood issues?

The Phoenix Commission on Housing and Neighborhoods is a 15-member panel of specialists in housing and neighborhoods issues, including architecture, planning, finance, law, real estate, and community outreach and development corporations. Members are appointed by the mayor and city council and serve terms of three years. The commission examines housing, neighborhood and planning issues that affect the quality of life for

all city residents. Commission meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 4:30 p.m. in the Phoenix City Hall.

Currently, the commission is publicizing the Affordable Housing Report it completed in 2001; the 31-page report includes the commission's recommendations to the city, housing and income statistics, suggestions for partnering with neighborhoods and other resources.

It's available by mail or by visiting asu.edu/caed/joint_urban/JUDPhone on the Internet.

If you'd like to receive the Affordable Housing Report by mail or have questions about the commission, call Pat Rivera of the Phoenix Finance Department at (602) 534-3132 or send an e-mail to pat.rivera@phoenix.gov.

Contact NSD

Administrative Services Division . . . (602) 534-5033
City of Phoenix general information (602) 262-6011
Community Development Division . (602) 534-2393
Coordination Division (602) 495-3738
NSD Director's office (602) 534-2825
Fight Back Program (602) 495-3738
Graffiti Busters hotline (602) 495-7014
Graffiti cell phone hotline #4663
Graffiti in progress 9-1-1
Grants Administration (602) 262-7158
Landlord/Tenant counseling (602) 262-7210
Neighborhood Association list. . . . (602) 495-0113
Neighborhood Economic
Development. (602) 495-5249
Preservation Division (602) 262-7844
Property maintenance violations . . (602) 262-7844
Property maintenance violations
. blight@phoenix.gov
Revitalization Division. (602) 262-4808

phoenix.gov/NSD

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To receive this information in alternative print/audio formats, contact the Neighborhood Services Department ADA Liaison, 200 W. Washington St., Phoenix, AZ 85003. Voice number (602) 495-5459. TTY (602) 495-0685.

Para recibir este boletín informativo en español, póngase en contacto con Michelle Morales al (602) 495-0113, ó por correo electrónico a michelle.morales@phoenix.gov en la Internet.

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City of Phoenix



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